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ABSTRACT

Sixteen instructors who teach the ninth grade career cluster programs at the Cape May County Career Center produced learning activity packets which would constitute the required career exploration and decision-making activities for ninth graders. At a forty-hour workshop conducted during the summer of 1979 they developed fifteen separate but related learning activities for each of eight career cluster programs to be offered at the County Ninth and Tenth Grade Career Center during 1979-80. (The activity learning packets are available separately as CE 026 154-155). On a pre- and post-workshop self-study 85% of the instructors also rated their abilities in curriculum development as "improved significantly." Pre- and post-course evaluations conducted after institution of the learning activity packets demonstrated students' increased career awareness. Eighty percent of the students were able to name at least ten jobs within each occupational cluster. Students also showed a 98% increase in evaluation of themselves as decision-makers by describing the specific steps which resulted in their course selection for grade 10. At the conclusion of the students' tenth-grade year in 1980 rate of reduction in drops and transfers will be assessed. Dissemination activities and strategies to eliminate sex bias and sex role stereotyping were also part of the project. (YLB)

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FINAL REPORT

A Career Guidance Curriculum for Ninth Grade Students Enrolled in the Cape May County Career Center.

NJ8013303

1979-80

Cape May County Vocational Schools
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210

PROJECT DIRECTOR

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Technical Center

CE 026 153

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Project Duration: July 16, 1979
Beginning Date

June 30, 1980
Ending Date

The Contractors undertaking this project were encouraged to express fully their judgments in professional and technical matters. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official funding agency positions or policies.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
TITLE PAGE	1
DISCLAIMER PAGE	2
PROBLEM STATEMENT	7
OBJECTIVES	9
RELATED RESEARCH	10
PROCEDURES	13
FINDINGS/INTERPRETATION	18
DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES	18
STRATEGIES TO ELIMINATE SEX BIAS & SEX ROLE STEREOTYPING	19
CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS	20

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IDENTIFICATION NO._____ AMOUNT FUNDED_____

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PROJECT TITLE: A Career Guidance Curriculum for Ninth Grade Students Enrolled in the Cape May County Ninth and Tenth Grade Career Center

LEGAL NAME OF APPLICANT DISTRICT, INSTITUTION OR AGENCY: Cape May County Vocational School District

ADDRESS: Crest Haven Road

Cape May Court House, NJ 08210

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(Area Code)

ABSTRACT

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

(Use this sheet and no more than one other to type in single-spaced form a statement of project objectives, procedures that were followed, state and local priorities emphasized and the expected contribution of the project to vocational education.)

The overall objective of this proposal was to have the 16 instructors who teach the ninth grade career cluster programs develop learning activity packets which would constitute the required career exploration and decision-making activities for ninth graders. It was expected that a 40-hour workshop conducted during the summer of 1979 would be a sufficient amount of time for the accomplishment of this task.

The specific objectives were as follows:

1. Instructors will develop a minimum of 15 separate but related learning activities for each occupational cluster. This objective was accomplished, and the completed activities have been submitted to the NJ Department of Education.

2. The instructors will increase their expertise in curriculum development by participating in the 40-hour workshop. A pre- and post- workshop self-study will be conducted to assess teacher growth and 80% of the instructors will rate their own abilities to design curricula as "improved significantly." This was accomplished and 85% of the instructors rated their abilities as "improved significantly."

3. The students will develop their career decision-making abilities so that there will be at least a 25% reduction in the number of drop-outs and shop transfers among tenth graders who continue to attend the Career Center. This will be determined at the conclusion of the 1980-81 school year.

4. Students will show an increase in their awareness of careers as measured by pre- and post- course evaluations, and 80% of the students will be able to name at least ten jobs within each occupational cluster. This was accomplished, and 80% of the students named at least ten jobs within each occupational cluster.

5. Students will show an increase in the evaluation of themselves as decision-makers as measured by pre- and post- self-evaluations. Specifically, 80% of the students will show an increase. After completion of pre- and post-course self-evaluations,98 % of the students showed an increase.

6. Students will demonstrate their abilities as decision-makers by describing the specific steps in the decision-making process which resulted in their course selection for tenth grade. This was accomplished as each student completed a "Career Trial Plan" therein documenting the decision for tenth grade.

A 40-hour curriculum development workshop provided the opportunity for 16 instructors to develop learning activities packets for eight career cluster programs offered at the County Ninth and Tenth Grade Career Center during 1979-80.

The LAP's focused on career exploration and decision-making so that the ninth graders enrolled in the Career Center systematically investigated four career clusters and made meaningful decisions as to how their individual abilities and interests relate to each cluster. Each student maintained a Personal Career Plan folder in which he or she documented all career exploration and decision-making experiences in each cluster.

A professional curriculum development consultant was hired to conduct a two-day program on curriculum development.

The LAP's were instituted in September 1979, and a mid-year and end-of-year evaluation were conducted to determine their effectiveness.

The following priority was emphasized in this project as indicated in P. L. 94-482 Sec. 133:

A-1: Development and dissemination of vocational education curriculum materials for new and changing occupational fields.

Special emphasis was placed on a local priority identified by the district's T & E goal which pertains to this project: "To help students explore their own abilities and needs in order to determine their potentialities and make a better choice in areas of specialization." The ineicators of successful fulfillment of this goal include:

1) Students will be able to identify a variety of careers available in their general trade area; 2) students will be able to identify job factors such as salary, location and training period which would be personally satisfying; 3) students will be familiar with job market information and how to acquire and keep a job, and 4) students will be able to describe and perform job entry level skills in their chosen fields.

By disseminating the results of this project at local, state and national professional meetings, it is expected that our efforts will assist other educators whose students have similar needs. At the local district level, it is expected that this project will contribute to our students' educational needs by providing a structure through which career exploration and decision-making skills can be developed. Inherent in the philosophy of vocational education at the county vo-tech is the notion that in order for students to make intelligent career choices, there is a need for educational experiences which will facilitate this goal. Successful entry into the world of work requires knowledge of existing local opportunities as well as the ability to make informed decisions. It is expected that the results of this project will enhance our students' abilities to make intelligent decisions about the world of work and understand how their own interests and aptitudes relate to the various occupational opportunities which exist today.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Our experience with high school students who attend the County Vocational Technical Center indicates that there is a need for better decision-making and more career exploration so that meaningful choices can be made and enhanced career planning can occur. The following items attest to this problem:

1. According to a survey conducted by the County Career Education Coordinator in cooperation with the Boy Scouts of America, 3,274 high school students expressed their primary career interests in 1976. The results indicated that there was an apparent disinterest in or ignorance of the major employment opportunities in the county. In an area which has a predominant hotel, motel, and restaurant industry, the percentages of students interested in these careers were as follows:

Cook/chef/baker	2%
Hotel/motel management	1%
Hotel/motel worker	1%

The marine industries such as fishing and marine construction as well as the amusement industry, seem to interest an equally small proportion of students:

Amusement worker	1%
Marine construction	1%
Boat construction & Maintenance	2%

These figures indicate that students do not have an accurate perception of the local employment opportunities.

2. During the 1977-78 school year, 194 high school students enrolled at the County Vocational Technical Center did not complete the vocational program in which they were originally enrolled. This represented 22% of all students and reflects a need for better decision-making and career information.

3. Another revealing statistic compiled during the 1977-78 school year was that 130 students transferred from one vocational program to another before completion. This represented 19% of all students and is also indicative of a need for improved career decision-making.

4. Another indication of the need for improved career guidance is reflected in the fact that the County's high schools traditionally send fewer graduates onto college than the state average. According to the New Jersey Department of Education's Office of Management information, the number of high school graduates from the County going onto further education in 1977 was 48.2%. However, the overall state average for 1977 was 60.5%. Since County graduates enter the labor market relatively earlier than graduates from other counties, it would appear that our students have to make better career decisions earlier than other studerts. This points out the need for better career guidance in order to enable these students to make a successful entry into the labor market.

All of these factors indicate the problem of students not having adequate career guidance at the local high school and career information in order to fulfill our local "Thorough and Efficient" (T&E) goal which addresses this need: "To help students explore their own abilities and needs in order to determine their potentialities and make a better choice in areas of specialization."

Inherent in the philosophy of vocational education at the county Vo-Tech is the notion that in order for students to make intelligent career choices, there is a need for educational experiences which will

facilitate this goal. Successful entry into the world of work requires knowledge of existing local opportunities as well as the ability to make informed decisions. It is expected that the results of this project will enhance our students' abilities to make their initial career choices meaningful.

OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of this proposal is to have the 16 instructors who will teach the ninth grade career cluster programs develop learning activity packets which will constitute the required career exploration and decision-making activities for ninth graders. It is expected that a 40-hour workshop conducted during the summer of 1979 will be a sufficient amount of time for the accomplishment of this task.

The specific objectives are as follows:

1. Instructors will develop a minimum of 15 separate but related learning activities for each occupational cluster.

2. The instructors will increase their expertise in curriculum development by participating in the 40-hour workshop. A pre- and post-workshop self-study will be conducted to assess teacher growth; and 80% of the instructors will rate their own abilities to design curricula as "improved significantly."

3. The students will develop their career decision-making abilities so that there will be at least a 25% reduction in the number of drop outs and stop transfers among tenth graders who continue to attend the Career Center.

4. Students will show an increase in their awareness of careers as measured by pre- and post- course evaluations, and 80% of the students will be able to name at least ten jobs within each occupational

cluster.

5. Students will show an increase in the evaluation of themselves as decision-makers as measured by pre- and post- self-evaluations contained in the CEEB book Decisions and Outcomes. Specifically, 80% of the students will show an increase.

6. Students will demonstrate their abilities as decision-makers by describing the specific steps in the decision-making process which resulted in their course selection for tenth grade. This activity will be included in the LAP.

RELATED RESEARCH

There are two career guidance programs currently in operation in New Jersey which exemplify the efficacy of this approach to curriculum development.

A "Decision-Making Skills" program for ninth graders at Camden High School is designed to assist students in improving their ability to make wise decisions regarding high school curriculum choices and career options. A specific strategy is the utilization of classroom activities involving selected portions of the workbook "Decisions and Outcomes" published by the College Entrance Examination Board. This is followed by the exploration of 33 career clusters which are presented to the students by their guidance counselors. This program's success was attested to by the fact that it was selected as an exemplary guidance project by the Division of School Programs, New Jersey Department of Education in 1978.

Another program, "Decision-Making Through Curriculum In-Service," was developed at the Newark Public School District and is designed to provide teachers with skills to develop decision-making activities for use in the classroom. To accomplish this, objective teachers attended

seven workshop sessions devoted to the development of decision-making skills, materials, and activities for career/life planning and values clarification. The essential elements of the program are the in-service training for the initial participants, and their subsequent training of other staff to maximize the number of students whose decision-making potentialities can be improved. This program was also selected as an exemplary guidance program by the Division of School Programs, New Jersey Department of Education in 1978.

Additional evidence supporting the efficacy of this project is available in a publication entitled "Successfully Implementing Career Education: Tips for School Administrators." Supported by a U.S.O.E. grant (#300760285) in June, 1977, this paper represented a summary of the outcomes of a series of regional career education seminars sponsored jointly by the American Association of School Administrators and the National School Boards Association. On page 4, Section III addresses the need for staff development in the implementation of a successful career education program. "Instructional strategies or means for achieving objectives should be left up to the staff and the instructional leadership. If a high level of understanding is not achieved. . . no ownership or commitment can be expected." This philosophy is inherent in the design of the curriculum development workshop which is the objective of this proposal.

The AASA/NSBA publication goes on to make specific recommendations for staff development which are also part of the design of this proposal; the following suggestions are offered on page 5 of the publication which are from the Mesa, Arizona, Center for Career Education:

1. Introduction to Career Development and Staff Implementation--A 50-hour inservice course covering concepts with emphasis on infusion of these concepts into the regular curriculum.

2. Curriculum Development Training--A 15 to 30 hour program to train teachers in curriculum development skills, integration of career education concepts into the curriculum and actual development time.

3. Career Material Media Resource Assistance--A career specialist will work with teachers and other staff in their utilization of career education films, kits, etc.

The theoretical rationale for this proposal was reflected in a position paper on career clusters developed by the Educational Improvement Center-South, in January, 1972. The paper entitled, "Career Clusters--An Organizational Technique to Facilitate the Delivery of Career Education" offered the following perspective:

> "In a career education program, each student is helped to develop a very broad awareness of the full range of career options in the world of work. At the same time, he is helped to develop his own self-awareness, to become cognizant of his own strengths and weaknesses, his aptitudes and capabilities, and his interests and needs so that he can make a realistic consideration of himself in relation to the many career options available in the world of work. In addition, he is helped to practice and develop logical direction-setting and decision-making skills which will be useful to him throughout his lifetime in considering alternative career possibilities.
>
> After becoming aware of the full range of career options in the world of work, each student is provided with opportunities to explore in considerable depth those kinds of careers which he feels are of most interest to him and most suited to his needs and capabilities. He has a chance, through realistic exploratory experiences, to test himself against the activities and requirements typical of a number of career areas of his choice.

> He is then in a position to make a rational choice of an appropriate career goal. Needless to say, this thorough and systematic approach to career possibilities is far better for the individual than the currently prevalent practices which make career selection more a matter of happenstance than a rational activity."

Finally, in an article entitled, "The Cluster Concept in Career Education" published in the December, 1972, issue of Educational Leadership, the following comment was offered by Lloyd W. Dull:

> "Many implications for successful implementation of career education seem evident. Among these are that. . . teachers, counselors, and administrators must be exposed to a thorough in-service program on career education in order to develop the sophistication and commitment necessary for success in this changed curriculum."

The adaptability of this concept to a county vocational technical school setting is evidenced by the fact that the Middlesex County Vocational Technical schools utilize a similar approach to career exploration at the ninth grade level. These students rotate among many vocational areas during the ninth grade. Upon completion of this experience, students are better prepared to make an informed decision regarding a vocational program at the tenth grade level.

PROCEDURES

A. General Design

The following items constitute the general design of this project:

1. A 40-hour workshop is proposed in order to provide the opportunity for 16 instructors to develop learning activities packets for eight career cluster programs to be offered at the County Ninth and Tenth Grade Career Center during 1979-80.

2. The LAP's will focus on career exploration and decision-making so that the ninth graders enrolled in the Career Center will systematically investigate four career clusters and make meaningful decisions as to how their individual abilities and interests relate to each cluster. Each student will maintain a Personal Career Plan folder in which he or she will document all career exploration and decision-making experiences in each cluster.

3. A professional curriculum development consultant will be hired to conduct a two-day program on curriculum development. This individual will also be brought back at the end of the workshop to review the final LAP's. This individual will be expected to have expertise in the following areas:

a. Developing course objectives
b. Lesson plan development
c. Selection of learning activities
d. Sequencing instructional units
e. Evaluation
f. Sources of Instructional Materials

4. The LAP's would be instituted in September 1979, and a mid-year and end-of-year evaluation would be conducted to determine their effectiveness. Teachers, students, and counselors would be surveyed regarding their attitudes about the program.

5. The following sequence of activities is planned for the workshop:

a. Pre-workshop Organization Meeting
b. Pre-workshop orientation for cluster shop teachers
c. Contract professional curriculum consultant
d. Conduct 40-hour curriculum development workshop
e. Contract printing services for final production of LAP's
f. Distribute LAP's to instructors in September, 1979
g. Conduct orientation for ninth grade students
h. Conduct mid-year evaluation of LAP's
i. Conduct end-of-year evaluation and forward final report to the Vocational Division in June, 1980.

6. Incorporated into the LAP's will be information about local employment opportunities from EIC-South's 1979 Business and Industry-Project SENSE. This survey of 250 South Jersey employers resulted in a comprehensive listing of the career education services offered by these employers. Their services include field trips and guest speakers, as well as listings of the number of employees in each company and projected employment opportunities.

7. The Career Center's Advisory Council members will be involved in a review of the LAP's so that they may insure that the career exploration activities have a realistic relationship to actual employment opportunities in the County.

B. Management Plan

The following is an outline of the specific activities, deadlines, and person(s) responsible:

Activities	Time	Person(s) Responsible
1. Pre-workshop orientation for cluster shop teachers	July 16, 1979	Project director, Asst. director, Career Center Principal*
2. Contract Consultant to participate in the August workshop	July 20, 1979	Project Director
3. Pre-workshop organization meeting	August 6, 1979	Media Specialist Project Director, Consultant Asst. Director, Principal*
4. Conduct Curriculum Development Workshop	August 20, 1979 to August 24 August 27 - 31	Project Director, Consultant Asst. Director, Principal* Media Specialist

*Individual with primary responsibility

	Activities	Time	Person(s) Responsible
4a.	Pre-workshop evaluation to measure teacher curriculum development skills	August 20	Consultant
4b.	Orientation to goals of the workshop	August 20	Project director
4c.	Orientation to Curriculum Development	August 20-21	Consultant
4d.	Orientation to audio-visual resources	August 22	Career Center Media Specialist
4e.	Orientation to Affirmative Action & Sex Stereotyping	August 22	Affirmative Action Officer
4f.	Curriculum Development Activities for Career Exploration (Teachers in groups of four)	August 22-24	Project director, consultant Asst. director, Principal* Media Specialist
4g.	Orientation to Career Decision-making	August 27	Project Director* Assistant Director
4h.	Review of Career Exploration learning activities	August 27	Principal* Advisory Council representatives
4i.	Simulation exercises in career decision-making	August 27	Project director* Assistant Director
4j.	Curriculum Development activities for Career Decision-making (teachers in groups of four)	August 28-31	Project director, consultant Asst. director, Principal* Media Specialist
4k.	Workshop Review, Post-workshop teacher evaluations	August 31	Consultant
4l.	Review of learning activities	August 31	Project Director* Asst. Director
4m.	Orientation to follow-up activities (i.e., Mid-year evaluations, end of year evaluations, in-service day follow-up activities)	August 31	Project Director

*Individual with primary responsibility

	Activities	Time	Person(s) Responsible
5.	Contract printer to reproduce learning activities and assemble Personal Career Plan folders	August 31	Project Director
6.	Distribute materials to instructors during in-service day	September 4	Principal
7.	Conduct orientation with incoming ninth graders--explain Personal Career Plan folder	September 10 (date approx.)	Principal* Project Director Asst. director
8.	Pre-test ninth graders using the Career Maturity Inventory	September 12 (date approx.)	Principal* Asst. project director
9.	Mid-year evaluation with individual cluster teachers	January 1980 (date approx.)	Principal* project director Asst. project director
10.	Post-test students using Career Maturity Inventory	June 1980	Principal* Assistant project director
11.	End of year evaluation	June 26, 1980	Principal* Project director Assistant project director

*Individual with primary responsibility

FINDINGS/INTERPRETATION

1. Instructors have developed a minimum of 15 separate but related learning activities for each occupational cluster.

2. The instructors have increased their expertise in curriculum development by participating in the 40-hour workshop. A pre- and post-workshop self-study was conducted to assess teacher growth and 85% of the instructors rated their own abilities to design curricula as "excellent or improved significantly."

3. Students have shown a dramatic increase in their career awareness as measured by pre- and post-course evaluations, and 80% of the students are able to name at least 10 jobs within each occupational cluster.

4. Students have shown an 98% increase in the evaluation of themselves as decision makers as measured by pre- and post- self-evaluations.

5. They have demonstrated this ability by describing the specific steps which resulted in their course selection for the 10th grade.

6. The rate of reduction in drops and transfers as a result of developing their career decision-making abilities cannot be demonstrated until the conclusion of their tenth grade year in 1980.

DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

The following strategies will be employed in an effort to disseminate the results of this project:

1. Final copies of all the LAP's would be sent to the New Jersey Curriculum Laboratory at Rutgers University for dissemination after field testing had occurred.

2. An article about the project would be forwarded to the AVA Journal, NJEA Journal, VEANJ Newsletter, NJ Interact, NJ Personnel and

Guidance Association Journal, and the NJ Career Education Association Newsletter. Articles would also be published in the local press so that the community would be informed.

3. We would offer to make a presentation about this project to the American Vocational Association, VEANJ State Convention, NJEA Convention, and the New Jersey Career Education Association's Annual Conference.

4. A county-wide meeting with representation from all sending districts would be conducted to orient teachers, counselors, and administrators to the results of this project.

5. A formal presentation about the project would be made to the Vo-Tech Advisory Council, the County Career Education Council, the County Administrators Roundtable, and the local Personnel and Guidance Associations winter meeting.

6. With the cooperation of the local high schools, a letter would be forwarded to the parents of all the eighth grade students in the county explaining the ninth grade career cluster program available to their children.

STRATEGIES TO ELIMINATE SEX BIAS AND SEX ROLE STEREOTYPING

The following strategies will be employed in an effort to eliminate sex bias and sex role stereotyping:

1. Copies of the completed learning activity packets will be sent to the State Department of Education's Office for Equal Access for review. Any recommendations would be considered and necessary changes made prior to final printing of the learning activity packets.

2. The County Vocational Technical school district's Affirmative Action Officer would take an active part in the 40-hour workshop serving as a resource person and reviewing the final LAP's. This person would also make a presentation on sex bias and stereotyping before the teachers began writing the LAP's.

3. As part of the workshop orientation, a short filmstrip about sex role stereotyping would be shown to all participants. This filmstrip was developed at the Middlesex County Vocational Technical School under the direction of Dr. Sommers.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the project indicate that the instructors have become more competent in curriculum development and students have demonstrated considerable improvement in their career decision-making skills.

It is recommended that a follow-up workshop be conducted so that learning activities can be developed for 10th graders who have experienced the 9th grade cluster program.

It is also recommended that a field test be conducted during the 1980-81 school year so that the learning activities may be improved and validated for future dissemination and reproduction.